

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claims 1-4, 7, 8, 13-15, and 17-24 are pending.

Claim 1 has been amended in a manner believed to overcome the rejection based on 35 USC 101.

Claims 1-4, 7, 8, 13-15, and 17-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Blake in view of one or more other references.

The rejection is respectfully traversed. With respect to claims 1, 23, and 24, the concurrently filed Declaration of Elias Levy establishes that applicant conceived the subject matter of claims 1, 23, and 24 prior to the December 31, 2002 effective date of Blake, Levy Declaration ¶¶1-4, and was diligent from a date prior to said effective date of Blake to a subsequent reduction to practice no later than July 28, 2003, Levy Declaration ¶¶5-7. 37 CFR 1.131. As such, claims 1, 23, and 24 are believed to be allowable.

Claims 2-4, 7, 8, 13-15, and 17-22 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above.

The foregoing amendments are not to be taken as an admission of unpatentability of any of the claims prior to the amendments. Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested based on the preceding remarks. If at any time the Examiner believes that an interview would be helpful, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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